

ADDRESS
OF
HON. N. J. HAMMOND,
BEFORE THE
ALUMNI SOCIETY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA.

JUNE 16TH, 1891.

ATLANTA, GA.:
CONSTITUTION PUBLISHING COMPANY.
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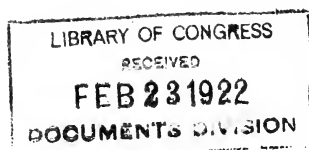
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UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA,
ATHENS, GA., June 16, 1891. }

HON. N. J. HAMMOND,

ATHENS, GA.

Dear Sir:—The Alumni Society has instructed me to thank you for your able, eloquent and instructive address delivered to-day, and to request that you furnish us with a copy of the same for publication. Will you kindly let me know when you can give me your manuscript.

Yours very respectfully,

DAVID C. BARROW, JR.

Secretary of the Alumni Society.

ATLANTA, GA., June 24, 1891.

PROF. DAVID C. BARROW,

Secretary of the Alumni Society,

ATHENS, GA.

Mr. Secretary:—Herewith please find a substantial copy of my address as requested by the Society. With thanks for the flattering words in which the request for the same was made,

I am yours, etc.,

N. J. HAMMOND.



MR. HAMMOND'S ADDRESS.

Mr. Hammond was introduced by Hon. P. W. Meldrim, President of the Alumni Society of the University of Georgia, as follows:

Gentlemen of the Alumni Society, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I have the pleasure of introducing, as the orator of the day, a gentleman whose ripe scholarship, blameless private life, eminent public service and unfaltering love for his *Alma Mater*, make him the ideal Alumnus.

Mr. Hammond spoke as follows:

Mr. President and Brother Alumni—Ladies and Gentlemen:

Guizot wrote that it was impossible to fitly appreciate as a cause of civilization, the appearance of great men. The potent influence is that which makes and multiplies great men, viz: great thoughts.

The Old World stood aghast when the Colonies, in this New World, pronounced a divorce between Church and State. But no less startling was the other new doctrine that "the distinguishing happiness of free governments is that civil order should be the result of choice and not necessity, and that the common wishes of the people should become the laws of the land."

Had we not had a surfeit of Centennial discourse you might be entertained by examining how radical were these departures from the hoary-headed, but not venerable, dogmas that the State should dictate what the people should believe as to religion, and that certain classes only and not the whole people should be consulted in making laws. But that is foreign to our present purpose.

Because the common wishes of the people were to become the laws of this land, our ancestors declared that "the public prosperity and even existence of free governments very much depends upon suitably forming the minds and morals of their citizens;" that such governments "can only be happy when the public principles and opinions are properly directed and their manners regulated." * * * and that "it should *therefore* be among the first objects of those who wish well to the national prosperity to encourage and support the principles of religion and morality, and early to place the youth under the forming hand of society that by instruction they may be moulded to the love of virtue and good order." These quotations from our legislation of 1785 shows Georgia's reasons for founding this University.

Such sentiments were not peculiar to this State. The Congress of the Confederation declared in the celebrated Ordinance of 1787, that "Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." And after the Union had been perfected by the adoption of the Constitution of 1789, and after this unique form of government had been successfully established, these sentiments of 1785 were almost literally quoted and applied to the whole country.

In Washington's farewell address he gave utterance to what he called "some sentiments the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation and all important to the permanency of our felicity as a people." No sentiment in that admirable address is more important than where he begged his countrymen "to promote as an object of primary importance institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge" because, "in proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened."

Therefore they do greatly err who complain because the State furnishes facilities for education as though she were only making a gift to the recipients. In that same preamble of 1785 to the Charter of the University, the legislature declared that, because, in the late "common danger and distress," the country had been so aided by the principles and abilities which wise regulations had

before established in the minds of our countrymen," they should "feel under the strongest obligation to form the youth, the rising hope of our land, to render the like glorious and essential services to our country."

Those grand ideas have lost nothing by the lapse of years. They broke the clouds and let the sun rise upon this continent.

Every school-house and college which has been built here in the past century, every law favoring education, made by the States and the United States, has added evidence of our faith in their soundness. The increased attention given to the subject in recent years shows that we are fully awake to the situation, that we believe that, if such forces in government were needed a century ago, when we occupied only a narrow strip of land on the Atlantic, they are far more needed now since our territory is so widely extended, our population so multiplied, our trade and commerce so increased, our values so great, and when all the complications of business and government call for such study and investigation as to tax the energies of the best minds of the country. Our Constitution of 1877 shows how Georgia meets the demand by her tripartite system of common schools, intermediary institutions and University. She affords to all who will devote themselves to the task, opportunity to become, to a certain extent, well rounded scholars.

We use "well rounded" advisedly. Ruskin said, "God tried himself when he made a tree." He had not in mind some slender pine which, growing with the multitude, stretched its attenuated stem upward to get the sunshine, but a tree which, because of its special excellence, had survived the destruction of the forest, and with room for expansion had struck deep and wide its roots, stretched outward and all about its strong arms around a sturdy trunk, and made itself both a delight and a beauty to all under its shade.

If creative energy might be thought to have put forth special effort on such an object, what powers were not called into play when a human being was made, that splendid animal knitted together by that subtle influence which every joint supplieth, and which the Romans, admiring his muscles and sinews, called *vir*; that higher order of being having aspirations above the herd, turning his eyes upward, and, therefore, called by the Greeks *anthropos*;

that supreme excellence, born after all other things, the product of the joint thoughts and purposes of the plural Elohim, who said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Such is the creature made for dominion over everything on earth, in the deep and in the air, which the State would educate for its own uses.

It would be interesting to discuss how that fullness is to be best attained; for instance, to defend the study of the ancient classics (so instructive, so enlarging, so strengthening to the mind) against the attacks of certain new lights at home and abroad; to suggest what books should be studied and what avoided. We cannot enter that field.

But, since religion and education have been linked together in the quotations above, it will not be inappropriate to advise the constant study of the book of our faith. We will not invade the office of the pulpit, but drop certain suggestions about the Bible. Scholars will find it the best repository of pure English, and be improved by its impassioned poetry and splendid imagery, by its illustrations, so simple and so well adapted to the common understanding.

The Old Testament contains the only early history of the origin of all laws, arts and sciences, by later history traced from Egypt to Greece, from Greece to Rome, from Rome to the World.

In it we find the foundation for all the laws of all the nations. Through it we perceive the strength of a faith which brought a nation out of slavery, kept it for centuries intact though opposed by all others, and after almost another century of captivity enabled it to rebuild its temple and re-proclaim its laws at Jerusalem.

We see mighty Babylon built, Nineveh grow, and Tyre stretch forth its Briarean arms to grasp the commerce of the world. We see "the beauty of the excellency of the Chaldeans" perish and "that great city" and Tyre doomed to destruction; and learn the causes of their downfall.

We witness the gradual rise of woman from a state of servitude and degradation, the struggle between the true and false religions and hear even priests denounced by the holier prophets. We see the budding thought of the immortality of the soul.

We wait four centuries from Malachi to Jesus for the gather-

ing forces to usher in that glad day when the harem gave place to the permanent home of one wife, when bleeding birds and beasts were pushed aside by the one Sacrifice, and the idols of earth were broken by one God—Jehovah.

The wall of hatred between Jew and Samaritan was torn away. Paul preached the resurrection from the dead, and the inspired vision of John, mentioning neither Jew nor Gentile, forgetting that any lines divided the nations, held forth promise of blessedness to all who will "come."

But the grandest lesson in both Testaments is that no longer is religion a thing for nations to quarrel about, in which none but States and kings and priests and prophets are concerned, but that the widow with her two mites is worthier than Dives with his millions, because of the difference of their characters; and that his personal duty is the supreme concern of each individual in society.

Assume now for the sake of the argument, and for that only, that the State and society have done all that is needful to perfect men; that, here and elsewhere in our Commonwealth, they are being sufficiently trained both in learning and in morals; we inquire what return shall such men make to the public, how they will exercise that "influence beyond the stretch of laws and punishments and * * * claimed only by religion and education."

Naturally as opportunity and inclination allow they will become husbands and heads of households. A Persian fable tells of one who in his bath was handed a piece of scented clay. He said to it, "Art thou musk or ambergris? For I am charmed by thy perfume. The clay replied, "I was but clay until I spent some time with the rose, and the sweet quality of my companion became part of myself."

Love of wife and children will stimulate to exertion to furnish them with comforts and luxuries. Wealth will be craved, and there is danger that the means of its attainment may not be always good. Some men have natural aptitude for accumulation, as others have for music or other things. Such men, if they will sink all else in the struggle for money, may become contemptibly rich and will be richly contemptible. Let no man desiring to be useful so seek wealth. Let every one prefer to leave his children

an example to follow rather than a fortune to spend. Let every man fear least when he shall be pointed out as worth a million, his neighbors will respond, "yes, but he is worth nothing but his million." Wealth is desirable, not to shine in clothing and equipage, not to gratify our vanity or appetites, nor even our tastes, but for the opportunities it brings for great enterprises, for the control and management of large plans for the benefit of our country and humanity.

But neither to wed nor to get rich do men need urging. Their interests will control them. Selfishness is the safe-guard of society. In other things, however, men do not so readily consent to duty.

Of course every man should have a purpose in life. His avocation or profession may be and generally will be the creature of circumstances. But he should ever keep before him some life task worthy of his struggle and toil. How piteous and yet how noble was the dying cry of Buckle, "My book, my book, I will never live to finish my book."

To that task must be brought not learning only, but muscle and nerve, industry, sobriety and energy of soul. These make unlettered men sometimes climb to enviable heights. How might such men fly with the eagle had they also education. The State demands more of those specially prepared for the work.

Three centuries ago Shakespeare put this thought into shape: When the guard was harrowed "with fear and wonder" at the ghost of Denmark's murdered King, and trembled in the presence of the unknown and mysterious, he cried out to Hamlet's friend, "Thou art a scholar. Speak to it, Horatio."

So in society, chaos to those who have not studied its laws; in government, a puzzle to fools, to wise men a noble science; in religion, a superstition to the multitude, a glorious vision to the initiated; in the midnight of ignorance, folly and vice, there comes a cry to each such exalted man: Thou art a scholar. Speak to these demons and bid them depart.

How shall they speak? The utterances must come from honest hearts. All ignoble fears must be banished. All mean desires must be buried. Fear of punishment and hope of reward are useful to a degree, but we seek now the influence beyond their stretch.

He who adores only from the fear of hell is a coward; he who seeks heaven only for its golden walks, its fruits of the tree of life and its sweet music of angelic harps in a voluptuary.

Only he is pure who loves all things good because they are good, and worships God because he is God. How glorious would be our condition if those whose neighbors seek of them precept and example were so honest and brave as to speak no word from fear, no sentence from the hope of personal gain, no opinion except what was thought to be best for society!

What shall they speak? What the subject and occasion need. They should be despised who, when sought for information furnish only guesses, who, when asked for opinions, furnish only notions. Any penny-a-liner may so write; any street babbler may so chatter.

That one may speak truly, he should accustom himself to think of things in their true relations, and call them by their right names. These are never changed by the sizes of the transactions nor the position of those who are employed in their doing. He who cheats in the sale of a yard of ribbon is like him who cheats in the transfer of a railroad. Both are swindlers. There is no difference between ignorant bullies, who defy the police, and the "best citizens" who take the law into their own hands. Both crowds are mobs. Call not him who steals a dollar over the counter and him who, behind the counter, by false figures and abused confidence, appropriates millions, by different names. They both are thieves. Let me warn you young men not to think of, nor call that which is denounced not only by the Church but by the Constitution of your State, the Code of Honor.

This lesson is well understood in high circles in politics and in religion. Washington, in that farewell address to which allusion has been already made, speaking of the Union, said, "It is of infinite moment that you should cherish a cordial, habitual and immovable attachment to it, accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as the palladium of your political safety and prosperity."

And the inspired son of Amoz, describing the wickedness of Judah and Jerusalem, complained, at their climacteric, that "they call evil good and good evil, put darkness for light and light for

darkness;" and said, "so their root shall be rottenness and their blossom shall go up as the dust."

Speaking from honest purposes and after an acquired habit of honest thought, the next thing in importance perhaps is that their opinions shall be their own. This does not imply that others may not be consulted. He is an unsafe adviser who fails to seek all known sources of aid, when opinions depend on facts. But if the question propounded be one of moral duty and the circumstances are plain, it should then be immaterial what others would do with like surroundings.

We hear much talk about Rehoboam taking advice of the young men instead of the old men. Generally it is safe to consult those of experience. But not all grey hairs are honorable; that depends on upon what heads they grow. The young princes who advised him to make the burdens of the people heavier were bad men doubtless; and it may be that the old men who advised him to be their servant that day that his subjects might be his servants forever after, were not time-serving politicians. We know not. But he knew that, to pamper his pride and vanity, to feed his corrupted tastes and sensual desires, Solomon had put grievous burdens on the shoulders of his people; and when called upon to lighten those burdens, Rehoboam, a king, had a kingly opportunity to right a wrong, and ought to have done it on the spot, without asking any time or any advice.

Graduates of colleges and universities should not make the mistake that they form a class or that their powers and culture are needed only in certain walks of life. On the farms and in merchandise as much as in the learned professions, in every department of human toil and effort, their abilities will tell for good to their country.

Nor should they shun the drudgery of every day public duty. For instance he who will not do his share in the administration of justice because he regards jury service irksome or ignoble helps to bring the laws into disrepute and possible contempt.

Nor should they shirk their proper share in political affairs. That they will find there much that is low and degrading, much that is even filthy and loathsome, only the more demands their

presence, that by the river of their influence they may cleanse the Augean Stables. Let them not shrink back for fear of taking contamination to their homes. If themselves pure, they are in no danger. "What though the waters of the sullen fen seem to pollute the snow of the swan? They fall off from her expanded wings, and pure as a spirit, she soars away and descends into her own silver lake, stainless as the water-lilies floating around her breast."

Whether he wills it or not, every educated man will be in some sort a leader of public opinion, in business affairs, in Church and State. He will, perhaps insensibly to himself, either degrade or elevate those about him. As the plane of intelligence is continually rising, he who would lead upward must keep abreast of the times, know something of history past and current, study men in their relations to society and government, know something of the habits of life and thoughts of not only his own countrymen, but of nations afar off; in a word, have that broadness and clearness which comes from extensive observation and correct information.

Let him prefer his own family, his own home, city, state or government, but without contempt or hatred for any other. Jonah was called to go a long distance to preach to a foreign nation, the enemy of his country, because he was fitted for the work. The effect of his labors in Nineveh, when he bent his energies to the task, showed how great a man he was. No wonder that, at first it took a whale to swallow him. But when he got into a pet and whined because "that great city," which he thought was to be destroyed, was saved, he became so contemptibly little that he would not have made a mouthful for the worm which had gnawed down his vine.

It is a grand thing to have the courage of one's convictions. Three examples stand out in sacred history to teach this noble courage. Joshua proclaiming that whatever Isreal may decide "as for me and my house we will serve the Lord;" Daniel worshipping after the proclamation of the King to the contrary, just as he did before; and Paul saying he would go to Jerusalem in spite of the warning of Agabus and the fears and entreaties of his friends. No less in business affairs and politics than in religion is such a quality admirable. He inspires confidence who hesitates not when duty calls, who would stake the Presidency upon a message.

But some will say that such conduct will bring defeat. That depends upon what we mean by defeat. If mere ephemeral success be all that is hoped for, if the best role is that of the trimmer, and the missing of the temporary rewards of such conduct be want of success, they are right. But

“Not in the clamor of the crowded street,
But in ourselves are triumph and defeat.”

When Burke was taunted that the Whig party had been disgracefully beaten, he replied, “O, illustrious disgrace! O, victorious defeat! May your memorial be fresh and new to the latest generation. * * * Let no man hear of us who shall not hear that in a struggle against the intrigues of courts, and the perfidious levity of the multitude, we fell in the cause of honor, in the cause of our country, in the cause of humanity itself. But if fortune should be as powerful over fame as she has been over virtue, at least our conscience is beyond her jurisdiction.”

Perhaps this talk had seemed more erudite had the examples and names used for illustration been taken from Grecian and Roman history. Perhaps it had been more entertaining to have drawn from the rich list of our alumni names of those who have illustrated high virtues in domestic life and in the marts of trade, in the forum and on the field, in journalism, in medicine, in law and in the pulpit. Here, in the hearing of their descendants, selection of some might have been thought unjust to others equally worthy of praise.

Illustrations from the Scriptures have been preferred because familiar to all. And having begun at the birth of our Government, it seemed meet to close by reference to that great statesman who pleaded in parliament against the oppression of our colonies because it was wrong, as he denounced the cruelties of his country's officials in India because they were wrong; who without family or wealth, by honesty and industry, won distinction above both; who in his old age declined a peerage; and was not buried in Westminster Abbey only because of his solemn order that his body should rest in the little church in the village of Beaconsfield.

To-day's offering contains mere suggestions and few in number. But no matter. The Commandments are but ten, and yet

on them stand all the laws of Christianity and civilization. But seven colors mingle in the varied beauty of flowers and forest, of landscape and sky. The combinations of but seven notes compass the whole range of music, from the vibrations of the child's harp to the swell of the grandest oratorios of Mendelssohn or Handel.

So if the educated youths of the country will heed these few admonitions; study the word of God; be true to their domestic duties; seek wealth only for the good they may accomplish; be industrious, honest, sober and earnest; love their country without narrowness, and serve it when called in common and exalted positions with like devotion; have high purposes and courageous maintenance of principles, they will compass the whole circle of life's duties, they *will* "render the like glorious and essential services to our country." They will make our government, as stable as the decalogue, and as glorious to the vision as the rainbow; and its movements will be music as grand as when the "morning stars sang together" at the birth of our world, and as sweet as when, at the birth of our Savior, the multitude of the heavenly host sang, "On earth peace, good-will to men."

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